Australian Bureau of Statistics

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Employment in renewable energy down 16% in 2015-16

Employment in renewable energy activity fell 16 per cent between 2014-15 and 2015-16, continuing a decline in renewable energy employment since 2011-12, according to an Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) publication released today.

ABS Program Manager of Environment and Agricultural Statistics, Lisa Wardlaw-Kelly, said that Employment in Renewable Energy Activities, Australia provides experimental estimates of the levels of employment in renewable energy by state and territory, and by types of renewable energy activities.

“Annual full time equivalent (FTE) employment in renewable energy activities was estimated to be 11,150 in 2015-16, down 16 per cent from 13,300 in 2014-15 and down from a peak of 19,220 in 2011-12,” Ms Wardlaw-Kelly said.

Small scale solar energy (which includes roof-top solar photovoltaics and solar hot water) continues to contribute the majority of employment among all renewable energy activity types. In 2015-16 it was estimated that annual FTE employment in small scale solar was 5,570 or 50 per cent of total employment in renewable energy activities. However, FTE employment in small scale solar has declined by 61 per cent between 2011-12 and 2015-16 (from 14,300 to 5,570).The decline in FTE employment in solar was mainly due to a reduction in the number of roof-top solar panels being installed on roofs across Australia during that period[1].

“This is the third edition of this publication. Innovations in renewable energy are emerging all the time. This is still a relatively new collection, and improvements to the estimation methods continue to be made as new data sources are identified, so the publication is expected to evolve over time,” said Ms Wardlaw-Kelly.

Further details can be found in ABS Employment in Renewable Energy Activities, Australia 2015-16 (cat. no. 4631.0), available for free download from the ABS website www.abs.gov.au

Media Note:

[1] Clean Energy Regulator (2016) Renewable Energy Target. **Postcode data for Small-scale installations.** http://www.cleanenergyregulator.gov.au/RET/Forms-and-resources/Postcode-data-for-small-scale-installations Accessed 24 Feb 2017.

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